



**Broadcast Educational Media Commission Meeting
September 09, 2021
2470 North Star Road, Columbus OH, 43221**

I. **Call to Order:** At 10:01 a.m., Chairman Robert Smith opened the meeting of the Broadcast Educational Media Commission.

A. **Roll Call:** At 10:01 a.m., roll call was conducted by Mrs. Gage.

Members Present:

Chairman Robert Smith
Commissioner Matt Dole
Commissioner Christine Merritt
Commissioner Dr. Charles Osborn
Designee Charles See
Designee Shaun Yoder
Commissioner Meira Zucker
Non-Voting State Senator Niraj Antani
Non-Voting State Representative Catherine Ingram (via virtual connection)

Members Absent:

Commissioner Geoffrey Andrews
Commissioner Stephen Black
Commissioner Rex Elsass
Commissioner Stephen Freeze, Esq.
Non-Voting State Representative Sharon Ray
Non-Voting State Senator Teresa Fedor

A quorum was declared.

Also Present at Meeting:

Executive Director Geoffrey A. Phillips;
Chief Financial Officer Alina Gage;

Also Present Virtually:

Chief of Engineering and Broadcast Operations Craig Stevenson;
Chief Information Officer Laura Bryson;
Assistant Attorney General Ashley Barbone;
David Carwile, Administrator of Ohio Educational Television Stations, Inc;
Mark Jividen, Chairman of the Ohio Radio Reading Services Alliance;
Kevin Martin, Chairman of the Ohio Educational Television Stations;
Michael Thompson, Chief Content Director of WOSU & Chairman of Ohio Public Radio;

David Stein, Video Services Manager, Licking Area Computer Association;
And Noah Blundo, Hannah News.

B. Commission Action Items:

1. Chairman Robert Smith was sworn in for a new 2-year term as Chairman at 10:03 a.m. by Assistant Attorney General Ashley Barbone.
2. Rep. Catherine Ingram was sworn in for a new term as a non-voting member at 10:06 a.m. by Assistant Attorney General Ashley Barbone.
3. Chairman Smith clarified the differences between those attending virtually and those in person. Ms. Barbone stated voting members cannot vote if attending virtually.
4. Chairman Smith spoke about the dual mandate assigned to the commission and how it relates to the current agenda.

Resolution 22-06: Motion to Approve May 13, 2021 Meeting Minutes

10:13 a.m. – Mr. Dole moved for approval of the May 13, 2021 meeting minutes. Mr. Yoder seconded. The motion passed via unanimous roll call vote.

Resolution 22-07: Motion to Dr. Osborn as Vice Chairman

10:14 a.m. – Chairman Smith moved to re-elect Dr. Osborn as the Vice Chairman for the current fiscal year. Mr. Dole seconded. The motion passed via unanimous roll call vote.

Resolution 22-08: Motion to Appoint Christine Merritt as the third member of the Executive Committee

10:17 a.m. – Mr. See moved to re-elect Ms. Merritt to the executive committee for the current fiscal year. Mr. Dole seconded. The motion passed via unanimous roll call vote.

5. Retiring Ohio Department of Education Superintendent Paolo DeMaria was recognized for service to the commission by Mr. Yoder. Ex. Dir. Phillips expressed his appreciation for Superintendent DeMaria's support of BEMC.

II. Powers Ascribed to BEMC by the Ohio Revised Code

- A. Assistant Attorney General Ashley Barbone discussed the powers given to the BEMC listed in the Ohio Revised Code 3353.04. She stated BEMC can perform any act necessary to carry out the Revised Code (see Appendix A). Included are: promote accessibility through broadcasting, transmission and interconnection (Joint Master Control), establishing standards for interconnection facilities (discrepancy reporting), entering into agreements for operating the interconnection, enter agreements for production and educational broadcasting (The Ohio Channel), execute contracts to carry out the law, act as a consultant for distribution of federal funds (none flow through BEMC), may make payments to sustain operating of stations (state subsidy fund distribution), establish guidelines governing purchasing (contract coordination with DAS), consider efficiency and savings of statewide programs, establish a systems support network (multi-media series).

1. Dr. Osborn asked if BEMC received COVID-19 reimbursement funds. Ex. Dir. Phillips replied affirmative and all of those funds are subject to audit by the federal government and state procurement rules apply.

III. **Finance**

A. **Capital Guiding Principles**

1. Dr. Osborn shared the recommendation from the Finance committee to establish guiding principles for capital funding budgets requests.
 - a. Mr. See spoke about the approach to the guidelines. The committee focused on top-level topics and to illustrate the priorities in the Commission.
 - b. Mr. Dole added that it covers both process and result and ensuring collaboration is key.
 - i. Chairman Smith asked about redundancy. Ex. Dir. Phillips clarified redundancy is built into the joint master control system at BEMC.
 - ii. Mr. Dole clarified the intent was unnecessary redundancy. Technological redundancy is necessary to broadcast operations. Synergy of centralization is the main focus of reducing redundancy.
 - c. Mr. Dole explained the principles of Collaboration, Sustainability, Avoiding unnecessary Redundancies, and Innovation.
2. Mr. Martin shared he plans to discuss the principles with member stations. The alliance looks forward to contributing additional data about the “avoiding unnecessary redundancies” section and to the remaining guiding principles.
3. Mr. Thompson of the Radio Alliance echoed Mr. Martin’s thoughts.
4. Chairman Smith stated his goal is to have buy-in from partners and affiliates.
 - a. Ex. Dir. Phillips stated he expects OBM to start the capital process for FY23-24 in September 2021 and the Commission should anticipate capital funding for inclusion in the next commission meeting agenda.
 - b. Chairman Smith said he appreciates the topics and expects the documents will need fine tuning.

B. **Financial Statement**

1. Mrs. Gage provided the September Financial Statement. All known expenditures are encumbered for FY21 and spending is as expected. Pending the action taken at this meeting, subsidy payments are targeted to begin in the beginning of October 2021.

C. **FY21 Subsidy Survey Results**

1. Mrs. Gage shared an analysis of the FY21 subsidy survey results. Charts and graphs were presented to show how the stations indicated funds were spent. This included funding by station, types of expenditures, and multimedia topics/audiences.
 - a. Chairman Smith asked if other types of data were included, specifically the audience. Mrs. Gage replied that type of information is not included in the subsidy survey, but discussions can occur to determine if this would be valuable.

D. Subsidy Allocation Formula Review

1. Dr. Osborn discussed the subsidy allocation formula review process.
2. Mrs. Gage provided an overview of the comparison document. Television and Radio each submitted changes of less than 1% per category type. RRS did not change the formula, only the minimums due to each station.
3. Mr. Dole shared this was a great example of collaboration between alliances and BEMC.
4. Mr. Martin stated he agrees this process was a good example of communication and collaboration. The result is not indicative of the process. Television took a deep-dive into the formula, and nothing was off the table. Mr. Martin sought to learn more and understand why past decisions were made. State allocation complements the federal subsidy allocations. One of the most important things we need to do in Ohio is to make sure all areas in Ohio are represented, he stated.
5. Mr. Thompson shared he found the process very valuable. Decision was made to round the numbers to make it easier on the business unit. Collaboration is increasing to make sure all of Ohio is served.
6. Mr. Jividen stated the RRS formula dates to the early 1990's and the formula ensures the amounts received correlate to the size of the service.

Resolution 22-09: Motion to Enact the Television Subsidy Formula Recommended by the Finance Committee

11:21 a.m. – Mr. Osborn made a motion to enact the Public Television, Radio, and Radio Reading services subsidy allocation formula as read by Mrs. Gage (move to adopt the revised Television, Radio, and Radio Reading Services subsidy allocation formulas as presented by the alliance leaders) for FY22 and FY23. Mr. See seconded. Motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.

IV. Advocates of Technology-Driven Education

1. Ex. Dir. Phillips spoke about potential metrics to measure the powers granted to BEMC by ORC 3353.04. Prior to BEMC there were many tasks assigned to the commission in addition to broadcasting. Most of those tasks were assigned to Higher Education or Ohio Department of Education (ODE) upon the creation of BEMC. Remaining tasks were the Joint Master Control (JMC) and video conferencing. A slide was shared with possible metrics for measuring the assigned powers.
 - a. Chairman Smith asked about outputs versus inputs for measurements, (ex. how many viewers receive the service). If there are measures being tracked by ODE or Higher Education, the commission can utilize those, too.
 - b. Ms. Zucker stated we measure what we value. She asked if BEMC talked to consultants who manage content clicks. Ex. Dir. Phillips stated this was an initial high level look at potential metrics. BEMC has not reached out to others to determine what outputs are available.

V. Distance Learning with delta variant for COVID-19

1. Mr. Yoder spoke about the progress the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) had made with RemotEDx. It was launched at the start of the pandemic to facilitate coordination for remote learning. Peak was reached in January 2021. With the new 2021-22 school year 97.5% of school districts are in-person learning only in the current school year. \$17.1 million of Elementary Secondary Schools Relief (ESSR I) federal funds was used to help schools and districts with connectivity issues. Proposals for ESSR II funds are due 09/22/2021.
 - a. Chairman Smith asked if there is guidance to schools and districts to direct them through the innovation in technology. Mr. Yoder responded the ITC's are at the forefront of providing that guidance.
 - b. Mr. See stated Higher Ed is investing funds to upgrade the technology at ITC's so they can provide greater bandwidth to local schools.
 - c. Mr. Yoder stated there is work occurring with the Ohio PBS stations on proposals to enhance educational opportunities. Mr. Martin shared stations realized the need for home learning and they were able to achieve that in just a few days. Stations received feedback that the service was well received.
2. Ms. Merritt explained the Emergency Broadband benefit (EBBT) funds program to promote broadband access in underserved areas. Contact was made by Heartland Forward to promote the EBBT funds and access to high-speed internet in twenty states and Ohio was selected. The Public Educational Partnership (provides opportunities to get distribution of educational resources across television and radio) campaign was live in July 2021. Results are forthcoming.
 - a. Dr. Osborn stated he was glad to hear about the EBBT project and that prices are coming down on internet connection. Personal computing device access and strong enough internet service to connect those devices were also raised as concerns. He stated some things to consider for future partnerships are passive versus interactive education and job development.
 - b. Mr. Yoder shared the importance of Broadband Ohio which has flourished over the last year.
 - c. In regards to BEMC's role with advancing educational technology, Chairman Smith asked Ex. Dir. Phillips to think about what success looks like and to consider what is important to measure.

VI. **Executive Session**

Resolution 22-10: Motion to Enter Executive Session

12:00 p.m. –Mr. See made a motion to enter Executive session to discuss compensation for Executive Director Phillips. Dr. Osborn seconded. The motion passed via unanimous roll call vote.

VII. **Return to Meeting order**

1. Chairman Smith called for return to order at 12:05 p.m. Roll call was made by Mrs. Gage to ensure all six voting members were present.

Resolution 22-11: Motion to Approve Pay Increase for Executive Director

12:05 a.m. – Chairman Smith made a motion to increase the Executive Directors pay by 3% effective June 20, 2021. Dr. Yoder seconded. The motion passed via unanimous roll call vote.

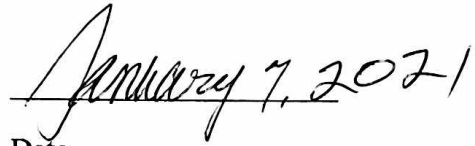
VIII. **Adjournment:**

Resolution 22-12: Motion for Adjournment

12:06 p.m. - Mr. See moved to adjourn. Ms. Merritt seconded. The motion passed via unanimous voice vote.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert C. Smith", written over a horizontal line.

Robert C. Smith, Chairman
Broadcast Educational Media Commission

A handwritten date "January 7, 2021" in black ink, written over a horizontal line.
Date